

# Psychoeducational Assessment and Report Writing



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# Preface

This book is designed to help graduate students in school and clinical child psychology acquire the needed knowledge and necessary skill set to evaluate students (K-12) and write effective psychoeducational assessment reports. Psychoeducational assessment reports, most of which are conducted by psychologists working in a school setting, are by far the most prevalent form of child psychological evaluation. The lack of availability of a training text on psychoeducational assessment and report writing makes this book a useful resource that fills a needed gap in the literature. Existing texts are too broad, offering simultaneous guidance on clinical assessment, psychoeducational assessment, adult assessment, and preschool assessment. The contents of these sources are primarily geared toward students (or practitioners) who seek to work in a private practice, university clinic, or hospital setting and span all age ranges (infant through geriatric). None of the existing books provide sufficient coverage of the process of psychoeducational assessment and report writing particularly in relation to the IDEA/state special education classifications for which psychologists in the schools will become responsible: learning disabilities, emotional disturbance, autism, intellectual disabilities, and other health impairment.

Unlike other volumes, this book presents an approach to assessment and report writing that may be readily adopted by trainers in school and clinical child psychology, understood by professionals and parents alike, and effectively utilized by IEP teams. The book casts a narrow net, seeking to offer specific guidance on the practice of psychoeducational assessment and report writing for school-aged children. Because no other books sufficiently focus on this topic, this text portends to become a useful resource for instructors in school and clinical child psychology who teach coursework on the evaluation of children. It will also be useful to graduate students in those disciplines as well as early career psychologists who wish for a refresher to their knowledge base.

The book comprises four sections. The first section furnishes a general overview of the process of psychoeducational assessment and report writing. The second section offers a section-by-section report writing discussion (e.g., Reason for Referral; Assessment Methods and Sources of Data; Assessment Results; Conceptualization

and Classification; Summary and Recommendations) with a chapter devoted to each major report component. The third section furnishes general guidance regarding the psychoeducational evaluation of major IDEA classification categories (e.g., LD, ED, autism, OHI, and intellectual disability). It also presents sample reports for those categories in an appendix at the end of each chapter. The final section discusses miscellaneous legal, ethical, and professional issues including practical guidance on the process of oral reporting.

## Objectives

Geared toward graduate students in school and clinical child psychology, but also useful as a refresher for practicing child psychologists, this book seeks to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Offer a comprehensive, practical resource that may be useful to instructors and graduate students in school and clinical child psychology on the process of conducting comprehensive psychoeducational assessments, writing reports, and furnishing feedback to parents.
2. Offer specific guidance on gathering information and data on the child via interviewing, rating forms, classroom observations, and developmental history questionnaires.
3. Offer a section-by-section detailed discussion of each psychoeducational report component including identifying information, referral reason, assessment methods and sources of data, assessment results, conceptualization and classification, and summary and recommendations.
4. Offer a structured approach to the provision of feedback to parents, caregivers, and teachers.
5. Offer a discussion of ethical, practical, legal, and empirical considerations when engaging in psychoeducational assessment, report writing, and oral reporting.

As a resource for graduate students, this text assumes that students already have a sufficient grasp of standard written English. Therefore, it will not review basic writing principles. If writing is generally an area of weakness then remediation is strongly suggested. This text will not cover functional behavioral assessment (FBA). An FBA may be an important adjunct to the psychoeducational report but the topic is covered adequately in other texts on this topic. It will also not cover the assessment of children's intelligence including reviews of specific cognitive ability instruments. This topic is adequately covered in existing texts. Instead, this book restricts its focus to the psychoeducational assessment of children in kindergarten through 12th grade. It does not extend its gaze downward to infant and preschool assessment nor upward to college, adult, and geriatric assessment. Additionally, the book does not discuss neuropsychological, vocational, or forensic assessment.

It approaches the practice of assessment from a psychoeducational, rather than clinical, perspective although there is overlap between the two approaches particularly when the psychoeducational assessment is conducted in a clinic, university, private practice, or hospital setting. The distinction between psychoeducational and psychological assessment and report writing is covered in the first chapter of this book.

## **The Book's Genesis**

This book was born out of my own need for a teaching text for the training of graduate students in school and clinical child psychology on the processes and principles of psychoeducational assessment and report writing in the school-aged child. There are several available resources on children's assessment and diagnosis, but none that specifically worked well for my purposes. There are even fewer texts that present real-world examples of comprehensive psychoeducational reports within a specifically delineated report writing framework. I have endeavored to accomplish this task and hope that you find that it augments your understanding of the process of psychoeducational assessment, report writing, and oral reporting.

Cherry Hill, NJ, USA

Stefan C. Dombrowski



# Acknowledgments

This book is dedicated to the past, present, and future graduate students in School Psychology at Rider University. Without your insightful questioning over the years this book would not have come to fruition. I also express continued appreciation to Judy Jones and Garth Haller at Springer. This is now my third book with Springer and the process of publishing with them has been enjoyable.

I also dedicate this book to my wife, Debbie; my two amazing little boys (Maxwell, age 9, and Henry, age 7); my nephew, Kevin; and my father.

S.C.D.



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